

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 06987 070200Z

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ACTION SS-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9284

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EXDIS

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MX,US,PLOS,PFOR

SUBJECT: GOM EXPLANATION OF ITS UNILATERAL MOVE TOWARD  
200 MILE ZONE

REF: MEXICO 6957

1. SUMMARY: FONSEC DIRECTOR IN CHIEF PASSED ME MESSAGE  
FROM RABASA TO SECRETARY KISSINGER EXPLAINING MEXICO'S PUR-  
POSES IN DECLARING 200-MILE ECONOMIC ZONE AND EXPRESSING  
COOPERATIVE INTENT IN WORKING OUT POTENTIAL CONFLICTS WITH  
U.S. END SUMMARY.

2. FONSEC DIRECTOR IN CHIEF SERGIO GONZALEZ GALVEZ SUM-  
MONED ME ON SHORT NOTICE THIS MORNING TO CONVEY MESSAGE HE  
HAD JUST RECEIVED BY TELEPHONE FROM RABASA IN ALEXANDRIA,  
EGYPT. (GONZALEZ COMPLAINED JOKINGLY THAT EASY TELEPHONE  
COMMUNICATION VIA SATELLITE FROM PRESIDENTIAL PARTY WAS  
MAKING LIFE VERY HECTIC FOR HIM.) MESSAGE ASKED THAT WE  
CONVEY TO SECRETARY KISSINGER REASONS FOR MEXICO'S  
UNILATERAL MOVE TO ESTABLISH 200-MILE ECONOMIC ZONE OFF  
ITS SHORES(REFTEL).

3. FIRST OF ALL, HOWEVER, RABASA ASKED THAT WE PASS ON  
HIS WARMEST THANKS TO SECRETARY FOR U.S. COOPERATION AT  
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PAGE 02 MEXICO 06987 070200Z

SAN JOSE IN RELAXING RIO TREATY SANCTIONS AGAINST CUBA.

GONZALEZ ADDED THAT HE PERSONALLY THOUGHT SAN JOSE ACTIONS CONSTITUTED MAJOR FIRST STEP TOWARD REVITALIZING INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM.

4. THEN THE BUSINESS AT HAND:

A. RABASA WANTED IT CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT MEXICO'S "POLITICAL DECISION" ANNOUNCED IN ALEXANDRIA HAD TO DO WITH ESTABLISHING AN "EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE", NOT A TERRITORIAL SEA, AND THAT NAVIGATION, OVERFLIGHT, AND COMMUNICATION RIGHTS OF OTHERS WERE THEREFORE UNAFFECTED.

B. MOREOVER, RABASA WISHED TO POINT OUT THAT MEXICO HAD CONTEMPLATED THIS ACTION FOR SOME TIME, THAT RABASA HAD TALKED TO SECRETARY KISSINGER ABOUT IT SOON AFTER LATTER HAD ASSUMED OFFICE, AND THAT GOM HAD ONLY BEEN DISSUADED FROM ACTING UNILATERALLY BY HOPES THAT CARACAS AND THEN GENEVA LOS MEETINGS WOULD PRODUCE AGREEMENT. SINCE THESE MEETINGS HAD NOT PRODUCED HOPED-FOR AGREEMENT, GOM HAD DECIDED TIME HAD COME TO ACT UNILATERALLY.

C. FINALLY, RABASA WISHED TO ASSURE SECRETARY THAT MEXICO WOULD NOT TAKE UNILATERAL ACTION WITH RESPECT TO AREAS OF POTENTIAL DISPUTE WITH ITS NEIGHBORS, E.G. BOUNDARIES WHERE RESPECTIVE 200-MILE CLAIMS MIGHT CONFLICT. ONCE MEXICAN DECISION WAS ENACTED INTO LAW BY CONGRESS, MEXICO WOULD EXPECT TO ENTER INTO NEGOTIATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS-- PARTICULARLY U.S. AND CUBA--TO SORT OUT SUCH DIFFERENCES.

5. I TOLD GONZALEZ I THOUGHT MESSAGE WOULD BE RECEIVED WITH DISAPPOINTMENT BECAUSE WE HAD HOPED TO TALK FURTHER AND BECAUSE WE FEARED UNILATERAL ACTION WOULD PRODUCE CHAIN REACTION, GREATLY COMPLICATING LOS NEGOTIATIONS OVER RELATED MATTERS(SEABEDS, RESEARCH, STRAITS, ETC.). AFTER REAFFIRMING FOR MY BENEFIT THAT GOM ACTION ONLY RELATED TO ECONOMIC ZONE AND NOT RPT NOT THESE RELATED MATTERS, GONZALEZ REMARKED THAT MEXICO HAD IMPRESSION U.S. WAS HEADED IN PRECISELY SAME UNILATERAL DIRECTION. HE THEN READ FROM REPORT BY AMB. CASTANEDA ON CONVERSATION IN GENEVA WITH STEVENSON AND MAW, IN WHICH CASTANED SAID HE WAS TOLD U.S. EXECUTIVE WAS UNDER SUCH CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURE THT IT WOULD HAVE TO SUPPORT AND MIGHT EVEN INITIATE UNILATERAL LEGISLATIVE ACTION FOR US 200-MILE ZONE. I SUG-

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PAGE 03 MEXICO 06987 070200Z

GESTED CASTANEDA MIGHT HAVE MISUNDERSTOOD AND MENTIONED MESSAGE WE HAD ONLY RECENTLY RECEIVED (STATE 174614) REITERATING CONCERN OVER POSSIBLE ADVERSE IMPACT OF UNILATERAL MEXICAN ACTION, BUT HE REITERATED HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT US EXECUTIVE HAD ALREADY DECIDED TO PROCEED UNILATERALLY.

6. I ASKED GONZALEZ WHAT THE MEXICAN LEGAL PROCEDURE WOULD BE FOR IMPLEMENTING WHAT RABASA HAD CALLED A

"POLITICAL" DECISION. HE SAID THAT INTERSECRETARIAL COMMISSION WAS NOW STUDYING WHETHER TO PROPOSE DECREE APPROACH, AMENDMENT TO PRESENT LAW, OR COMPREHENSIVE NEW MARITIME LAW; OF THE THREE, LAST SEEMED MOST LIKELY. IN ANY CASE, BASIS WOULD BE GENEVA COMMON TEXT. HE ADDED THAT LEGISLATIVE ACTION WOULD LIKELY TAKE SOME MONTHS, AND DECISION WOULD NOT TAKE PRACTICAL EFFECT IN INTERIM. DETAILS OF HOW FISHING RIGHTS, MINERAL/PETROLEUM EXPLORATION, ETC., WOULD BE AFFECTED COULD NOT BE PREDICTED AT THIS POINT, HE SAID.

7. EVIDENTLY TO SHOW GOM'S GOOD INTENTIONS TOWARD ITS NEIGHBOR'S INTERESTS, GONZALEZ SAID THAT ORIGINAL SCENARIO HAD INCLUDED PUBLICATION OF A FONSEC BULLETING PROVIDING LEGAL BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION FOR "POLITICAL" DECISION AND ORIENTATION FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION TO FOLLOW. THE PRESIDENT HAD DECIDED AT THE LAST MOMENT, HOWEVER, THAT THE BRIEF SHOULD NOT BE PUBLISHED, SO AS TO LEAVE MEXICO'S POSITION MORE FLEXIBLE IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS. (GONZALEZ WAVED A COPY OF THIS BULLETING AND SIGHED OVER THE WORK HE HAD PUT INTO IT.)

8. CONCLUDING, GONZALEZ SAID THAT HE WAS CERTAIN RABASA WOULD HOPE TO DISCUSS THIS QUESTION PERSONALLY WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY.  
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